

Wholesaler's Susie B notions are questionable

By Roger Boye

This week's column answers more questions about coins and currency.

Q—A few weeks ago I received a copy of the Coin Wholesaler, a 32-page newspaper published by the Chattanooga Coin Co. It includes articles indicating that the government will recall Susan B. Anthony dollars [made between 1979 and 1981] and suggesting that the coins would make excellent investments. Do you agree?
P.E., Urbana

A—No on both counts. Treasury officials insist that they have no plans to melt the 500 million Susie Bs in storage nor can they legally recall the more than 300 million coins held by banks and individuals. Anthony dollars made for circulation have almost no rarity potential because of the huge supply outstanding.

Also, the United States Mint continues to sell six-coin sets of Anthony dollars to collectors for \$10 each. To order, send a check or money order to the mint at P.O. Box 500, Philadelphia, Pa. 19105.

Incidentally, the U.S. Postal Service has filed a complaint against the Chattanooga company, charging it with false representation in an advertisement for Anthony dollars.

Q—When the new-styled \$2 bills came out on April 13, 1976, we attached 13-cent postage stamps to five bills and had the post office cancel the stamps. How much would our "first-day bills" be worth?

T.E., Chicago

A—Probably less than \$4 each. The best varieties, according to a book by Andrew J. Vero, are bills bearing odd serial numbers, unusual stamp combinations or postmarks from less populated states like Wyoming or North Dakota.

Q—In our pocket change we've found some off-color Lincoln cents dated 1985. Are they a valuable minting error?

U.P., Chicago

A—Probably not. Since 1982 Uncle Sam has made Lincoln cents out of zinc plated with pure copper, but in some coins the plating is less than 100 percent pure. That creates a lighter-than-normal appearance.

Judging from reports in the hobby press, several collectors have been finding such pennies recently, but the "faded Lincolns" have only a small market premium. In a March 11 Numismatic News advertisement, a Michigan dealer is charging \$14.95 each for uncirculated specimens, but some experts suggest that those coins are overpriced.